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ABSTRACT

A 10-month study by a select committee of students, faculty, and staff in 1973 resulted in a new form of student government at El Camino College (California). The new governmental format features five to seven member student councils in each of the 12 academic divisions of the College. Each of these 12 councils sends two representatives to an all-student Senate which attends to the interests and needs of the total student body. The Senate selects a president who is assisted by three vice presidents, relating to the areas of instruction, student personnel, and finance. This report summarizes some of the activities of the 12 divisional student councils and the Student Senate during the 1974-75 college year and identifies participants in the student government program. An evaluation of the program reveals that most of the recommendations of the select committee have been fully, or to some extent, implemented during the 1974-75 college year. In addition, former criticisms of student government have been relieved, while the objectives of the new government are being achieved. The new system provides increased opportunity for student input into the life of the college community, and its strength lies in the relationship which is developing between student government and the instructional program. (Author/NHM)

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A REPORT AND EVALUATION OF STUDENT GOVERNMENT

AT EL CAMINO COLLEGE, 1974-75

by

Henry P. Kirk
Dean of Men
September, 1975

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I. OVERVIEW

This is a report and evaluation of a new form of student government initiated at El Camino College during the 1974-75 college year. The result of a ten-month study by a select committee of students, faculty, and staff, the new governmental format features 5-7 person student councils in each of twelve academic divisions of the College. In addition to serving the needs of students within the division, each council sends two representatives to an all-student Senate which attends to the interests and needs of the total student body. The A. S. President, selected by members of the Senate, presides over that body and is assisted by three vice presidents who relate to the areas of Instruction, Student Personnel, and Finance.

Many of the programs and activities of the 1974-75 Student Senate and twelve divisional councils are summarized in this report, and participants in the student government program are identified. Based on the results of a survey, it appears that the recommendations of the Joint Study Committee on Student Governance have been implemented to a significant degree, that those most closely identified with student government feel that former criticisms of student government have been corrected to some extent as a result of the new organization, and that the objectives for the new student government are being achieved to some degree.

II. THE JOINT STUDY COMMITTEE ON STUDENT GOVERNANCE

The Joint Study Committee on Student Governance was formed at the request of Mr. Jay Garner, President of the Associated Students, during the fall semester, 1973-74. In a message to all members of the Associated Students, Mr. Garner requested that the President of the College and the President of the Academic Senate join him in appointing a special ad hoc committee composed of students, faculty, and administrators to study and make recommendations about student governance at El Camino College.

The Committee began its work by reviewing the history of student government at El Camino College as recorded in the minutes of Student Council meetings, College yearbooks, and other publications. Mr. Merl Sloan and Dr. H. M. Maddaford, former Deans of Men, were most helpful to the Committee in sharing their experience with student government since the inception of the College. It was evident that student involvement in the traditional form of student government had been relatively substantial in the past, but that changes had occurred with respect to the College and also its students. It was concluded that the pattern of government devised for students of the 1950's may not be appropriate for students of the 1970's and beyond.

To provide information about El Camino's student body, Dr. Jerry Garlock presented research data on the characteristics of the current student population. Enrollment comparison reports, major subject intents, analysis of graduates, and other data were reviewed. It was noted that there was an increase in the number of students who are older and attending part time and in the evening.

In order to obtain input directly from El Camino students, the Committee scheduled a series of "Open Hearings" at various hours over a three-day period.

These hearings were publicized with posters, letter to the Editor and classified advertisement in the College newspaper, and announcements at meetings of Student Council and Inter-Club Council. The ideas, reactions, and suggestions of many El Camino students were solicited during these sessions. The Committee found that most students favored some form of student government, but that the demands of college studies and employment precluded their own personal involvement.

In addition to the open hearings described above, a survey was administered to El Camino College students selected at random, which asked for student ideas about student governance. Most of the respondents indicated that they were unaware of the present student government and its activities. However, the respondents demonstrated considerable interest in student government and had very definite opinions about the structure and function of student government.

Meetings were scheduled between members of the Joint Study Committee and members of fall, 1973, and spring, 1974, Student Councils and also with club representatives who make up Inter-Club Council. Members of Student Council indicated that they valued the experience that they were receiving from their service in student government but agreed that other forms of student government might facilitate increased involvement and effectiveness. Inter-Club Council representatives perceived a vital role for student government on campus but expressed a desire for Inter-Club Council's fiscal and functional independence from student government.

To gain insight into the perception of student government held by the Administration and Members of the Board of Trustees, joint meetings were scheduled between the Study Committee, the President's Cabinet, and also with the Board of Trustees. The Committee found that both Administrators

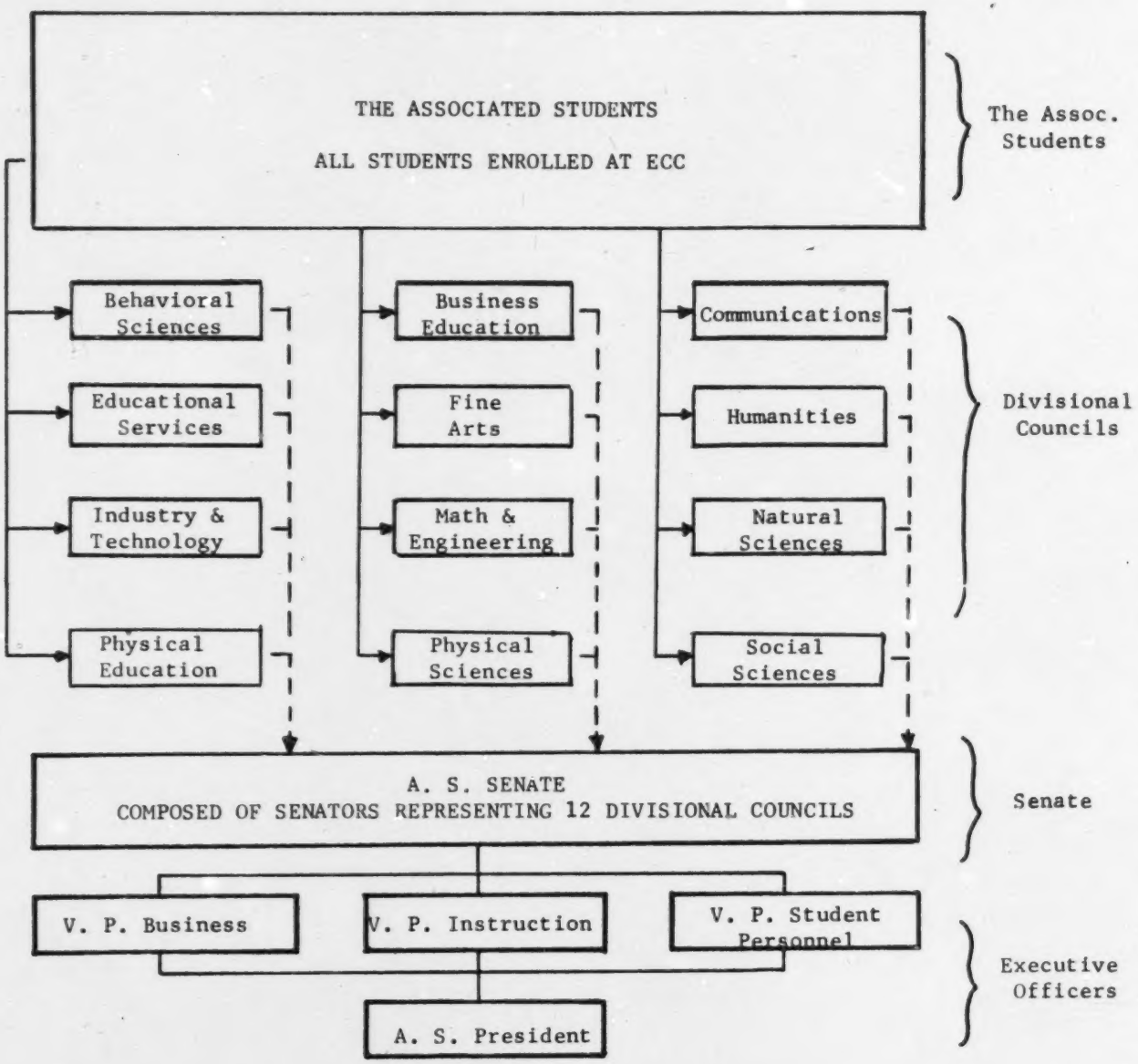
and Members of the Board were vitally interested in the topic of student governance and were eager to cooperate with student government which was representative and responsible. In addition, members of the committee made regular reports to the Academic Senate, Instructional departments, and other groups, and the activities of the Joint Committee were reported in the College Newspaper.

Several alternative forms of student government were considered, ranging from complex bicameral unions to somewhat unstructured student "town meetings." Constitutions from other community colleges were gathered and analyzed. Models of governance were considered from other aspects of government, both national and foreign. It was decided that the form of student governance recommended for the Associated Students of El Camino College should provide for maximum student input at all levels, agree with the philosophy of the Institution, and parallel inasmuch as possible the organizational structure of El Camino College.

Finally, the purposes and objectives of student government were conceptualized; criteria for student government were identified; and recommendations were made concerning student government, clubs and organizations, and the coordination of the program of student activities and services. The new form of student governance called for an all-college student senate, composed of representatives from student councils in each academic division.

EL CAMINO COLLEGE

STUDENT GOVERNMENT



III. REPORT ON STUDENT GOVERNMENT, 1974-75

A. The Student Senate

After the general election in October, 1974, members of the Divisional Student Councils selected their representatives to the Student Senate. The new Senate, in turn, elected the new A. S. President and then considered a number of issues affecting the ECC student body. The Early Semester proposal was studied with care, and feedback was obtained from students in most divisions.

The "Gripe System" was instituted to provide a vehicle for student expression, ideas, and suggestions. Key student appointments were made to A. S. Offices and all-College Committees. A student government information table was established at registration, and signs were placed on campus buildings to assist students in locating their classes.

Plans were developed for a summer, 1975, student leadership training program to be led by National Leadership Methods (NLM). Student delegations represented El Camino at CCCSGA Conferences in Palm Springs and Sacramento, as well as Area III meetings at local campuses. The National Students Association Western States Conference was also attended by ECC students.

As a tribute to Mildred "Connie" McCord, beloved Instructor and Student Activities Advisor, a scholarship fund was instituted in her memory.

Child care continued to be a topic of interest on campus this year, and a permanent fund was instituted which will someday be used for a child care facility at or near El Camino College.

The Associated Students assisted in the development of the Career Expo Program, funded participation in the National Wheelchair Olympics, and are

helping to make plans for the Bicentennial celebration next year. Student art work was purchased for the A. S. Art Collection, and a basketball tournament for BSU teams from other colleges was supported.

Opinions from the student body were obtained on proposals for campus security, and a resolution was unanimously approved which stated the Senate's position on this matter.

Plans were made for the following year, and the 1975-76 A. S. Budget was approved. In addition to activities of the Senate, the Divisional Councils were involved with projects and activities related to students in their division.

B. The Divisional Councils

The A. S. Constitution calls for "Divisional Councils corresponding to the number of instructional divisions within the College." (Sec. 2.A.) A brief summary of major activities by Divisional Council is as follows:

Behavioral Sciences
- Sent letter to faculty about Student Government and Gripe System
- Speaker from Cal State University, Long Beach
- Financial support for child care fund

Business Education
- Published "Business Gazette" newsletter
- "Money Makers" speaker series
- Established "Business Achievement Awards"
- Assisted formation of Rotaract Club

Communications
- Supported Alpha Mu Gamma (Foreign Language) and Beta Phi Gamma (Journalism)
- Radio station study and broadcast over KSUL-FM
- "Communications Division Awards" to four students

Educational Services
- "Best Suggestion" Program
- Hosted disabled students at Hodger Stadium
- Purchased support items for Learning Center

Fine Arts
- Jazz musical concert in Music 7
- Supported Howard Banks and Connie McCord Scholarships
- Selected art works for A. S. Art Collection and financed Art Gallery Program

Humanities
- Edited and published "Myriad" Literary Journal
- Funded divisional scholarships
- Publication of "Humanitarian"

Industry & Technology
- Assisted development of VICA Club
- Drafting competition for high school students
- Participation in Skill Olympics, winning three gold, two silver, and three bronze medals

Math & Engineering
- Sponsored "Laserium" Program
- Developed "Discovery Speaker Series"
- Purchased five digital calculators to be available to ECC students on a check-out basis

Natural Science
- "Nature Walk" Program
- Christmas party for majors
- Outstanding student awards

Physical Education
- Supported Women's Gymnastics
- Assisted ECC Volleyball Team's trip to Hawaii
- Funded basketball competition of Steve Shaw

Physical Sciences
- Christmas party for majors
- Outstanding student award
- Purchased chemistry films

Social Sciences
- Research Assistant Program
- Involvement in Departmental Meetings
- Bicentennial Committee

C. Participants in Student Government, 1974-75

The following students were participants in student government during the 1974-75 academic year:

Sandra Santifer . . . . . .President
Harold Tyler . . . . . .Vice President-Business
Edward Schubert. . . . . Vice President-Instruction
Patty Phelan . . . Vice President-Student Personnel

Behavioral Sciences
Robert Blackwood
Beverly Massingill*
Patty Phelan
Monica Smith
Marc Solomon

Business Education
Geana Douglas
Sandy Falcon*
Adnan Kehar
Michael White
Bruce Rivers

Communications
William Banks, Jr.
Richard Camp
Larry Harrington*
Gill Nash
Robert Woods

Educational Services
Teresa Apodaca
Leandro Carde
Cathy Elder*
Susan Glotfelty
Bruce Krier
Holly Perez
Bruce Schulman
David Stafford

Fine Arts
Anna Hilley*
Priscilla Johnson
Denise Smith
Charlou Simonson
Stephen Szabo

Humanities
Martin Hill
Sona Manjikian
Lynda Hall
Michael Pitt
Martin Ventura*

Industry & Technology
Art Allen
Gayle Backers
Gary Jenkins
Lynn Jones*

Math & Engineering
Michael L. Beck
Paul Twedt
Harold Tyler*

Natural Sciences
Christopher Andrews
Keith Crafton
Diane Markley*
Rosina Rael
Vickie Rossi

Physical Education
Ralph Hoetger*
Donna Ortez
Linda Whitehead
Debra Lee Fennessy

Physical Sciences
Henri Atkinson
Marilyn DeGignac
Karl Konrad
John Lee*

Social Sciences
Allen Lampert
Richard Porter
Edward Schubert*
Teresa Straley
Grace Gerber
Linda Droker

* Council Chairperson

Advisors

Mr. Merl Sloan. .Vice President-Student Personnel
Dr. Henry P. Kirk . . . . . Dean of Men
Mrs. Martha Pate . . . . . Dean of Women
Dr. Nate Jackson. . Coordinator, Special Services

Staff
Jean Farmer
Lois Maki
Janice Watanabe
Patrice Johnson

IV. IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Study Committee made a series of recommendations to various segments of the campus community. One year later members of the Student Affairs Advisory Committee were asked to evaluate to what degree these recommendations were implemented. The results are as follows:

Recommendation of the Joint Study Committee	Implementation			
	Fully	Some	Not	Comments
A. Student Governance 1. Recommendation to the Assoc. students that a new form of student government be adopted which shall reflect the organizational structure of the College, composed of divisional councils, a student senate, and appointed directors and commissioners.	X			Approved by A. S. May 23, 1974 election
2. Recommendation to ECC Faculty a. Cooperation with new government	X			
b. Faculty senate serve as advisors		X		Responded as requested
c. Students able to participate in Academic Senate meetings	X			Student input welcome
d. Agenda item report from A. S.			X	Not needed
3. Recommendation to Administration a. Cooperation with new government	X			Significant issues were referred to stu. government
b. Student membership on committees		X		
c. Support	X			Staff and supplies provided
4. Recommendation to Board a. Support of student government	X			
b. Adequate financing	X			
c. Regular agenda item for report from A. S.		X		Board open for items upon request.

Recommendation of the Joint Study Committee	Implementation			
	Fully	Some	Not	Comments
B. Clubs and Organizations 1. Greater role in social activities	X			
2. ICC function independently of student government	X			
3. Separate budget	X			
4. ICC select own chairperson	X			
5. ICC constitution modifications	X			
C. Activities & Services Program Programs, activities, and services implementation		X		
D. Student Affairs Advisory Committee 1. Advisory Committee be appointed	X			
2. Initial assignments a. Support and assist structure		X		
b. Formulate new policy			X	
E. Finances 1. Recommended funding from Auxiliary Services		X		As able, based on Student I. D. Card Sales

V. EVALUATION OF STUDENT GOVERNMENT

To determine the effectiveness of the new student government at El Camino College, a questionnaire was developed. Questions were asked concerning the extent of the correction of criticism of previous student government, if any, and the degree to which the criteria or objectives for the new student government were being achieved.

Questionnaires were sent to sixty-four students and forty ECC staff members most closely associated with student government, including ECC administrators. A 42% rate of response was received from students, and a 60% rate of response was received from ECC staff during the summer, 1975.

The results of the Student Government Evaluation were as follows:

Part A

1. "Lack of Accountability
   Student Officers are not accountable to any particular segment of the campus student population. Candidates run and are elected at large, without any defined constituency."
   Evaluation: Compared to previous years, the 1974-75 student government was:

	A. Much more accountable	B. More accountable	C. About the same	D. Less accountable	F. Much less accountable	F. No opinion
Students	13 (49%)	8 (30%)	4 (15%)	0	0	2 (7%)
Staff	7 (29%)	14 (58%)	3 (13%)	0	0	0

2. "Alienation from Mainstream of Campus Life
   Student government is seen as an isolated "sandbox" operation which operates "over there," somewhat removed from the rest of the College."
   Evaluation: Compared to previous years, the 1974-75 student government was:

	A. Much less isolated	B. Less isolated	C. About the same	D. More isolated	E. Much more isolated	F. No opinion
Students	11 (41%)	15 (55%)	1 (4%)	0	0	0
Staff	6 (25%)	16 (67%)	1 (4%)	0	0	1 (4%)

Evaluation of Student Government, Part A (Continued)

3. "Low Acceptance of Responsibility
Student government leaders, especially in the late 60's and early 70's, departed from activities for the general student welfare to promote the special interests of the few."
Evaluation: Compared to previous years, the 1974-75 student government was:

	A. Much more representative	B. More representative	C. About the same	D. Less representative	E. Much less representative	F. No opinion
Students	12 (44%)	14 (52%)	0	0	0	1 (4%)
Staff	9 (38%)	12 (50%)	2 (8%)	1 (4%)	0	0

4. "Vague Goals and Objectives
Student government leaders individually and collectively have not developed a clear understanding of their goals and objectives related to their service in student government."
Evaluation: Compared to previous years, the 1974-75 student government had:

	A. Much clearer goals	B. Clearer goals	C. About the same	D. Less clear goals	E. Much less clear goals	F. No opinion
Students	4 (15%)	17 (63%)	4 (15%)	0	1 (4%)	1 (4%)
Staff	5 (21%)	12 (50%)	3 (12%)	0	0	4 (17%)

5. "Low Involvement Level of Students in Governance
This is shown by decreasing paid membership in the Associated Students, lack of candidates to run for office, and insignificant student turnout at the polls."
Evaluation: Compared to previous years, the 1974-75 student government had:

	A. Much more student involvement	B. More student involvement	C. About the same	D. Less student involvment	E. Much less student involvement	F. No opinion
Students	5 (18%)	11 (41%)	9 (33%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	0
Staff	6 (25%)	12 (50%)	4 (17%)	0	0	2 (8%)

6. "Lack of Power and Authority
Students perceive that their government is powerless and thus ineffective. Students maintain that they will become seriously involved in student government when that government is given more responsibility and authority over the issues that affect students."

	A. Much more responsible	B. More responsible	C. About the same	D. Less responsible	E. Much less responsible	F. No opinion
Students	10 (37%)	7 (26%)	9 (33%)	0	0	1 (4%)
Staff	4 (17%)	12 (50%	3 (13%)	1 (4%)	0	3 (13%)

Part B

Criteria or Objectives for the New Student Government

	A. Attained to a high degree	B. Attained to some degree	C. Uncertain	D. Not attained to significant degree	E. Not attained to any degree	F. No opinion

1. Accountability
Students should know their officials and be able to hold them responsible for their performance. Student officers should be able to identify and respond to their specific constituency.

Students	8 (30%)	10 (37%)	1 (3%)	8 (30%)	0	2 (8%)
Staff	2 (8%)	16 (67%)	1 (4%)	2 (8%)	1 (4%)	2 (8%)

2. Democracy
Officials should be chosen by, representative of, and responsive to the wishes of a majority of the students.

Students	12 (44%)	8 (30%)	1 (3%)	6 (22%)	0	0
Staff	5 (21%)	10 (41%)	4 (17%)	4 (17%)	0	1 (4%)

3. Effectiveness
Officials should be given enough authority to fulfill the legitimate desires of the students and be competent enough to use that authority efficiently.

Students	11 (41%)	12 (44%)	2 (7%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	0
Staff	4 (17%)	10 (41%)	3 (12.5%)	4 (17%)	0	3 (12.5%)

4. Decentralization
Maximum participation in student government should be afforded by election of some officials from relatively small constituencies to perform student government services for each segment of the college community.

Students	15 (56%)	6 (22%)	3 (11%)	2 (7%)	0	1 (4%)
Staff	8 (33%)	13 (54%)	2 (8%)	0	0	1 (4%)

5. Integration in All-College Government
Student officials should be involved in faculty and administrative policy-making processes.

Students	9 (33%)	1 (4%)	9 (33%)	5 (19%)	1 (4%)	2 (7%)
Staff	2 (8%)	11 (46%)	1 (4%)	8 (33%)	0	2 (8%)

6. Educational Value
Student government involvement should impart important knowledge and provide valuable experience in the cooperative and responsible exercise of decision-making responsibility.

Students	9 (33%)	14 (52%)	4 (15%)	0	0	0
Staff	4 (17%)	10 (41%)	4 (17%)	3 (12.5%)	0	3 (12.5%)

Evaluation of Student Government, Part B (Continued)

	A. Attained to a high degree	B. Attained to some degree	C. Uncertain	D. Not attained to significant degree	E. Not attained to any degree	F. No opinion

7. Conformity with Expressed Student Preferences
The form of student government should reflect wishes of the students as expressed to the Committee.

Students	7 (26%)	12 (44%)	4 (15%)	2 (7%)	0	2 (7%)
Staff	5 (21%)	11 (46%)	4 (17%)	1 (4%)	0	3 (12%)

8. Relevance to the Broader Political System
The constitution should establish a student government similar enough to national, state, or local governments to make experience with it of some use in off-campus political life.

Students	9 (33%)	9 (33%)	4 (15%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	3 (11%)
Staff	5 (21%)	9 (38%)	6 (25%)	2 (8%)	0	2 (8%)

9. Participation
All students, by virtue of their enrollment at El Camino College, should be represented by and have access to student government.

Students	11 (41%)	6 (22%)	2 (7%)	6 (22%)	0	2 (7%)
Staff	6 (25%)	10 (41%)	3 (13%)	3 (13%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)

Part C

Overall Evaluation

"In your opinion, compared to previous years, the 1974-75 student government was:

	A. Significantly improved	B. Some improvement	C. About the same	D. Worse than previous	E. Much worse than previous	F. No opinion
Students	15 (55%)	8 (30%)	0	0	0	4 (15%)
Staff	12 (50%)	9 (38%)	1 (4%)	0	0	2 (8%)

The questionnaire also provided space for comments. The following were among the comments received:

From Students

...I feel that the ECC student government has been greatly improved this past year. This new system has brought council members closer to the students they represent to find out what they really like to see done in the different departments.

...It is in my opinion that the problem now with student government is not with the government set up and the students who administer it, but it is with the apathy of the student body. The apathy is the most frustrating feeling that my council had to cope with. The students who attend El Camino in the most part do not want to get involved.

...Student involvement and participation are on the up-swing at El Camino. Students are beginning to become aware that "people" get things doen and "titles" (such as Pres., Vice Pres., etc.) are just that; titles do not and cannot achieve goals.

...Student government despite much talk to the contrary, is still hampered and overly protected by members of the faculty. This will eventually lead either to peaceful disenchantment and non-cooperation from students or to physical (active) demonstrations as in the 60's, which should be avoided if possible.

...No doubt these past two semesters have been a pivotal point. Everybody needs government, students too. Government was a joke, only theory but is now relevant and able to dovetail with student life.

...Students are not made as aware of their representative government/ officials as is necessary for an effective student government. More publicity is needed at ECC to identify student representatives during office.

...I feel it is basically an excellent idea, however, too much time is spent talking instead of doing.

...I enjoyed attending the meetings very much. I feel it helped me as well as my fellow students. I hope when I return to El Camino in the fall to participate again.

...Being the first year of the new government, many students were given an opportunity to respond to a new form of representation. I feel the new government should "snowball" and become more effective as semesters pass.

From Faculty and Staff

...The contact I had with representatives of student government impressed me as much more serious and concerned with their jobs and constituencies. (Coordinator)

...The mechanics for student involvement in their government is there. New motivation is needed to get them to participate. (Dean)

...Decentralization of student governance is a decided improvement. (Faculty)

...It was encouraging to see the number of worthwhile and educational projects developed this year by the different councils. Personally, I was especially impressed by the Business Education Series of "lectures" and the Natural Sciences Nature Walk--the difficulties notwithstanding. (Classified Staff)

...Although this structure is too new to really evaluate, I feel that it is worthwhile and will cooperate fully. (Dean)

...The concept of the present form of government is a significant improvement over the past years. It would seem that a challenge yet remaining is to encourage a greater number of the student body to take an active interest in their government. (Faculty)

...I feel faculty who are interested in assisting their own student divisional councils need to be found and integrated into the advisement and assistance aspect of operating a council. (Dean)

...Old student government was moribund. The new system has promise as far as mass student participation is concerned. (Faculty)

...I feel the format represents significant improvement and fine prospects for the future. (Dean)

...This form of student government should be considered for adoption by every community college in the state. (Dean)

...The new student government is like a breath of fresh air. It has done more to restore credibility to the process of student involvement than could have been conceived a year ago. (Administrator)

VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This concludes the report and evaluation of student government at El Camino College during the first year under a new form of student government.

The result of a ten-month study by a select committee of students, faculty, and staff, the new form of government features twelve smaller student councils in each academic division of the College. In addition to serving the needs of students within the division, each council sends two representatives to form an all-student Senate, which concerns itself with the interests of the total student body.

The report summarizes some of the activities of the twelve divisional student councils and the Student Senate during the 1974-75 college year and identifies participants in the student government program.

It would appear that most of the recommendations of the Joint Study Committee have been fully, or to some extent, implemented during the 1974-75 college year.

Students, faculty, and staff members most closely associated with student government, both before and after the establishment of the new government, report that former criticisms of student government have been corrected to some extent and that the objectives of the new student government are being achieved to some degree.

As advisor to student government at El Camino College for the past five years, the author has been favorably impressed with the new format of student government and its positive impact on student participants. It is believed that the new system provides increased opportunity for student input into

the life of the College community, and its strength lies in the relationship which is developing between student government and the instructional program.

As a conclusion to this report, the observations of Dr. John W. Dunn, chancellor of Foothill Community College District and chairman of the team visiting El Camino as a part of the evaluation for accreditation with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, will be noted:

> "The innovative reorganization of the student government is particularly impressive to our team. Only time will tell how successful it will be, but it is an imaginative approach to a problem that is facing colleges everywhere. It is important for a college to have a strong student government because it makes the teaching and learning more homogeneous."[1]

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[1] Warwhoop, October, 18, 1974

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

OCT 3 1 1975

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES